



April 2003

Discussion Paper for the 2004 Master Plan: Student Transfer

Executive Summary

State law directs the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to: (1) establish transfer policy¹ and (2) maintain a statewide transfer of credit policy and agreement, in cooperation with state institutions and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC).² This paper provides a framework for discussing transfer policy by analyzing efficiency, access and the potential for a new degree, the Bachelors of Applied Science.

Transfer Efficiency

Key Findings

- Freshmen graduate more efficiently than transfer students at all public institutions.³
- Transfer students in social sciences and history graduate more efficiently than transfer students in sciences and math.
- Transfer students, followed over a seven-year period, graduated at high rates, particularly when they transferred with at least 90 community college credits.
- Two recent student surveys revealed few problems in transfer. The reasons students cited for not transferring often were factors beyond the college's control.
- Anecdotal evidence, however, suggests that course acceptance processes may cause some problems for students.

¹ RCW 28B.80.350.

² RCW 28B.80.280.

³ Using broad definitions of transfer.

Next Steps

HECB staff are following and analyzing the results of two national studies which may offer interesting directions for future transfer policy in Washington. The first study is reviewing and defining the purpose of general education requirements which often make up the bulk of courses transferred. The second study outlines specific recommendations for improving transfer.

Transfer Access

Key Findings

- Public four-year colleges and universities enrolled about the same proportion of transfer students in 2001-2002 as they did in 1992-1993.
- However, large freshman classes and budget shortfalls could limit future access for transfer students.

Next Steps

Options for addressing transfer student access include: (1) rationing, (2) increasing the supply, and (3) providing financial incentives for public four-year colleges and universities to accept transfer students. The paper discusses many ways to increase opportunities for transfer students, ranging from allowing selected community colleges to offer upper-division courses to adding a comprehensive baccalaureate institution in King County.

A New Bachelors of Applied Science Degree

Finally, the paper explores the potential for a new type of bachelors degree with an “applied” focus. The new Bachelors of Applied Science would be based on completion of a new Associate of Applied Science degree.



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Introduction

Thousands of students begin their college careers at community and technical colleges, attracted by their low tuition costs, geographic accessibility, and “open door admission.” Helping these students transfer to four-year colleges and universities is essential to promoting broad public access to higher education and ensuring that all students are able to pursue their educational goals. In addition, students who transfer from two-year colleges are more likely to be the first in their families to attend college,¹ and those who plan to transfer are more likely to be African-American, Hispanic, or Native-American than students attending four-year colleges directly from high school.²

Therefore, this paper is based on two underlying assumptions: 1) providing access for transfer students is valued, and 2) clear and predictable transfer policies and processes are important to the efficient functioning of higher education in Washington.

In its 1987 master plan, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) defined the goal of transfer as a “clear and predictable transfer policy that makes upper-division study accessible and maximizes the efficiency of a system with a strong community college component.”

The Board’s goal remains relevant today. Yet there are lingering perceptions that transfer students are poorly prepared for baccalaureate study and/or that the transfer process is inefficient.

This paper provides a framework for discussing transfer issues, in preparation for developing the 2004 Master Plan, and addresses the following questions:

¹“Some 70 percent of baccalaureate graduates who were CTC transfers were first generation college students compared to under half of the students who start at the baccalaureate institutions.” Source: State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), “Role of Washington Community & Technical Colleges Related To Transfer,” Summer 2002, taken from a Bachelors degree study conducted in 1988 and currently being updated with 2001-02 data.

² See Appendix A for comparison by ethnicity.

- **HECB authority and role:** What is the HECB's authority in transfer? What other groups have an interest in these issues?
- **Transfer efficiency:** What works well in transfer? What could be improved, and how?
- **Transfer access:** Will access for transfer students become restricted in the future? What can be done to improve access?
- **Bachelors of Applied Science:** Can transfer be used to help benefit the state's economy?

I. The Board's Authority and Role

State law directs the Higher Education Coordinating Board to: 1) establish transfer policy³ and 2) maintain a statewide transfer of credit policy and agreement, in cooperation with state institutions and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.⁴

According to state law (RCW 28B.80.290), the agreement is designed to do the following:

- Facilitate the transfer of students and the evaluation of transcripts.
- Better serve people seeking information about courses and programs.
- Aid in academic planning.
- Improve the review and evaluation of academic programs at the public colleges and universities.

The HECB is specifically prohibited from:

- Requiring or encouraging the standardization of course content.
- Prescribing course content or the credit value assigned by any institution to the course.

The Role of Other Groups

Many other groups also have an interest in transfer.⁵ For example, the Inter-College Relations Commission establishes and maintains guidelines for transfer agreements, reviews policies and procedures affecting transfer, and recommends changes when appropriate.

The provosts of the public four-year colleges and the chief academic officers of the community colleges recently reaffirmed their commitment to transfer and established the following guiding principles:

³ RCW 28B.80.350.

⁴ RCW 28B.80.280.

⁵ A more complete (although not exhaustive) list of groups involved with transfer is attached as Appendix B.

- A primary focus on the interests of students for access and success.
- Collaboration between institutions on a number of specific degree pathways.
- The inherent value in diversity among institutions and program offerings.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges has expressed specific interest in the following policies, which will be addressed throughout this paper:

- Access for transfer students.
- Development of new pathways for transfer students.
- Technical bachelors degrees.

II. Transfer Efficiency

What areas in transfer work well? What could be improved, and how? Answering these questions is surprisingly difficult due to the number and diversity of participating institutions and the limited information available on transfer student performance.

Participating institutions range from the state's 34 community/technical colleges and six four-year institutions to many independent, for-profit and on-line institutions. Numerous off-campus centers and collaborative arrangements, combined with a growing number of transfer agreements, add up to a challenging level of complexity.

Washington's primary indicator of transfer success is the Graduation Efficiency Index, which is based on data collected routinely for institution accountability reports. Other sources of data and information are available from the institutions, as well as from national studies. This paper will review the following data and information sources:

- Graduation Efficiency Index.
- Graduation rates.
- Student surveys.
- The course acceptance process used by four-year institutions.
- Current transfer literature.

Appendix C provides a list of current transfer policies. Many of these policies were developed in 1994 and relate to the "Direct Transfer Agreement," which provides priority in admissions for transfer students who meet certain criteria.

A. Graduation Efficiency Index (GEI)

The Graduation Efficiency Index measures efficient course-taking. A "perfectly efficient" student would enroll and earn transfer credit for exactly the number of credits required for the degree, with no repeated or failed courses. The index is calculated by dividing the minimum credits required for the baccalaureate degree (minus transfer credits) by the number of credits taken at the four-year college.

$$\frac{(\text{Minimum Credits Required for Degree}) - (\text{Transfer Credits Accepted by Four-Year College})}{\text{Total Credits Taken at Four-Year College}}$$

Example 1: A “perfectly efficient” transfer student would look like the following:

$$100\% \text{ Efficiency} = \frac{180 \text{ Credits Required for Degree} - 90 \text{ Transfer Credits Accepted}}{90 \text{ Credits Taken at Four-Year College}}$$

Example 2: A transfer student who takes more than 90 credits at the four-year institution would be considered “less efficient:”

$$90\% \text{ Efficiency} = \frac{180 \text{ Credits Required for the Degree} - 90 \text{ Transfer Credits Accepted}}{100 \text{ Credits Taken at the Four-Year College}}$$

Data Drawbacks

The Graduation Efficiency Index:

- **Only includes data from students who actually graduate.** The index excludes students who never make it to that point. For that reason, this paper will also include a review of graduation rates to evaluate transfer.
- **Does not account for excess credits taken at the two-year level.** Four-year institutions currently accept a maximum of 90 transfer credits from a community college. Since the Graduation Efficiency Index subtracts only transfer credits accepted by the four-year institution, it does not account for credits over 90 taken at a community college.
- **Defines “transfer” students very broadly.** For example, a transfer student who completes an associate degree and 90 community college credits is not differentiated from a student who transfers without an associate degree and fewer than 90 community college credits.

Using broad definitions of transfer, freshmen graduate “more efficiently” than transfer students

Institution	Freshmen	Transfer	Difference
Central Washington University	92.3	89.2	3.1
Eastern Washington University	89.1	78.7	10.4
The Evergreen State College	92.0	90.0	2.0
University of Washington	90.5	82.7	7.8
Washington State University	89.9	83.0	6.9
Western Washington University	86.9	79.5	7.4

Source: 2002 HECB Accountability Update.

Key Findings

- In general, students who enroll as freshmen at the public four-year colleges and universities graduate more efficiently than students who transfer from other institutions.
- The difference between freshmen and transfer graduation efficiency is greatest at Eastern Washington University (10.4 percent) and smallest at The Evergreen State College (2.0 percent).

It is interesting to note that Central Washington University, which provides a detailed, major-specific advising guide for transfer students, reports the second highest transfer Graduation Efficiency Index among all of the public four-year institutions (89.2 percent for all majors). The Evergreen State College reports the highest Graduation Efficiency Index (90 percent), which is also interesting since Evergreen does not specify any major requirements. More study is necessary to determine why certain institutions rank more highly than others, as these scores could relate to a variety of factors. However, perhaps Central Washington University's attention to major-specific planning can provide some clues.

As previously mentioned, the Graduation Efficiency Index at each institution groups all transfer students together – no matter how dissimilar in majors and incoming credits. The Graduation Efficiency Index becomes much more valuable for assessing transfer when it is calculated at the major-specific level and with groups of transfer students with similar amounts of transfer credit. In response to a legislative request, staff at the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges recently calculated the credits to degree for different areas of study at the University of Washington and Washington State University, isolating students who had earned at least 90 credits or an associate degree at a community college.

- Students in social science majors graduated more efficiently (with fewer credits completed at the four-year institution) than students in science and math majors.

This result is not surprising because the Associate of Arts direct transfer degree meshes well with the courses required for social science majors. It is less applicable in the areas of science and mathematics.

To address these concerns, the institutions developed an Associate of Science degree in 2000 with two tracks:

- Track 1: Majors in biological sciences, environmental/resources sciences, chemistry, geology, and earth science
- Track 2: Majors in engineering, computer science, physics, and atmospheric sciences

The institutions currently are working to develop additional associate transfer degrees in business, elementary education, and secondary education in math and science areas.⁶ It is expected that these new degrees will soon result in graduation efficiency similar to the efficiency reported for social science majors. However, to verify that these degrees work as well as expected, colleges will need to clearly identify and carefully track the graduation efficiency of students earning these degrees.

HECB staff will continue to work with the institutions to try to determine the reasons behind variations in the graduation efficiency index.

Conclusion

- The Graduation Efficiency Index provides more meaningful results when it is broken down by major and number of credits transferred.
- Major-specific planning and associate degrees tailored to specific majors (“tracks”) are being created and are expected to lead to greater efficiency.

B. Graduation Rates

In March 2003, HECB staff collected graduation rate data for transfer students from the institutions. The data were divided into two categories: 1) transfer students with at least 40 quarter credits but less than 90 from a Washington community college, and no transfer credits from any other institution; and 2) transfer students with 90 or more quarter credits from a Washington community college and no transfer credits from any other institution.

The goals were to compare graduation rates for students with similar amounts of credits, and to determine whether the number of transfer credits affected long-term graduation rates.

⁶ It is not known at this time whether an additional associate’s transfer degree will be developed specifically for mathematics majors.

Data Drawbacks

Graduation rates measure time-to-degree, an indicator that often falls short for transfer students who may be more likely to attend part-time and/or be employed, and thus take longer to graduate. For transfer students, staff reviewed data over a seven-year window to provide a “fair chance” at graduation.

Specifically, staff tracked the number of transfer students who enrolled in fall 1995 and graduated by fall 2002. Thus, transfer students who entered fall 1995 with 40 quarter transfer credits and attended part-time (at least 6 credits per quarter) would still have had a good chance to graduate. Results are as follows:

**Students who transfer with 90 or more credits
generally graduate at a higher rate than those with fewer credits**

Institution	Transfer Students (40<90 Credits)		Transfer Students (90+ Credits)	
	Number of Entering Students (Fall 1995)	Graduation Rate (Fall 2002)	Number of Entering Students (Fall 1995)	Graduation Rate (Fall 2002)
CWU	151	58.9%	567	76.5%
EWU	351	55.3%	441	73.0%
TESC	68	58.8%	118	83.9%
UW Seattle	580	67.8%	819	73.0%
UW Bothell	33	66.7%	54	70.4%
UW Tacoma	30	83.3%	70	70.0%
WSU: all campuses*	314	64.0%	788	74.8%
WWU	48	72.9%	707	72.7%

Source: Institutional Survey, March 2003.

*WSU reported cumulative six-year graduation rates with entering semester credits equivalent to the entering quarter credits requested.

Key Finding

- In general, transfer students who enter with at least 90 community college credits graduate at a higher rate than those who enter with fewer credits. The two exceptions

(UW Tacoma and Western Washington University) may be atypical due to the small cohort sizes for students entering with fewer than 90 credits.

These data can be used to promote discussion among the institutions to determine the reasons for variance in graduation rates, and to identify steps that institutions could take to improve graduation rates and efficiency. An important conclusion that can be reached so far, however, is that transfer students do graduate at high rates, given time.

C. Student Surveys

Two recent surveys provide the student's perspective on the transfer process. Clark College and Bellevue Community College recently hired a consultant to conduct a telephone survey of students who had attended for the purpose of transferring and had earned at least 45 credits. The sample from Bellevue Community College included 1,706 students, with 935 responding. The sample from Clark College included 881 students, with 578 responding.

Two student surveys offer student perspective on transfer issue

	Bellevue Community College (July 2002)	Clark College (May 2002)
Percentage of Students Not Transferring	43%	29%
Reasons for Not Transferring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuing at vocational institution (20%) ▪ Work (16%) ▪ Never planning to transfer (16%) ▪ Family/personal (13%) ▪ Finish two-year degree first (11%) ▪ Miscellaneous (10%) ▪ Already have four-year degree (9%) ▪ Lack of money (5%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decision to work/take time off (about one-third) ▪ Life changes (e.g., illness, marriage, children) (20%) ▪ Financial reasons/decisions to pursue vocational degree (% not specified)

	Bellevue Community College (July 2002)	Clark College (May 2002)
Percentage of Students Who Experienced Difficulty in Transfer	16%	12%
Types of Difficulties Encountered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficulties with having transcripts sent ▪ Credit loss at transfer ▪ Advising/counselor ineffectiveness ▪ Lack of fulfilled prerequisites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advising was the main problem

Key Findings

Although these two surveys are not necessarily representative of all community college students, they do provide a useful view of student perspectives.

- Students who did not transfer failed to do so for reasons mostly beyond the community college's control. For example, work, life changes, and other personal decisions were cited as top reasons for not transferring.
- The proportion of community college students experiencing transfer difficulties was very low.
- Clark College Survey: Earning a degree was the most important factor in transfer rates. Students encountered more problems when they transferred before earning a degree. Students enrolled in engineering and computer science programs were least likely to earn a degree before transferring.

The survey results support other data, such as graduation efficiency and graduation rates, which emphasize that earning an associate degree makes a positive difference in transfer. Findings discussed earlier were associated with student experiences after transfer. However, these surveys, especially the survey by Clark College, reveal how earning an associate degree helps with the actual process of transfer.

D. Course Acceptance Process

Each four-year institution decides whether or not to accept courses from a two-year college. Problems can arise when a university has accepted a course up to a certain point, and then decides not to accept it. Advising staff at the two-year institution are sometimes unaware of the decision until a student, having had the course rejected, informs an adviser or faculty

member. The extent of course rejection problems has not been quantified, but anecdotal evidence suggests that the communication process could be improved.

No data are currently available to document these problems. Data could be collected by the Inter-College Relations Commission, which serves as a type of forum for transfer issues. Documentation would help determine the extent of these problems and how much they may be affecting transfer efficiency.

E. Literature Review

HECB staff reviewed recent literature describing efforts to improve transfer in other states. Two studies are especially relevant. One focuses on general education requirements; the other offers suggestions for state policy actions in transfer.

1) “Greater Expectations for Student Transfer,” The Association of American Colleges and Universities (Ongoing)

Through a FIPSE grant, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) is now working with the state university systems of Georgia, Maryland, and Utah to:

- Identify the educational purposes of their pre-existing statewide requirements.
- Specify learning outcomes implicit in the requirements.
- Make the purposes clear to all faculty members teaching courses that meet those requirements.
- Explain the intent of general education requirements to students.
- Develop assessment strategies.

According to this study, transfer students often view general education requirements at baccalaureate institutions as meaningless and vague. Defining the purpose of an undergraduate education (and general education requirements) will therefore lead to clear goals which can then be related to transfer agreements. The project calls for “systemic reform” as follows:

The only way to reconcile the demands for efficiency and accountability is to come to inter-institutional or, better yet, system-wide agreement about the intended outcomes of the general education program, and then to link those outcomes closely to the transfer agreement. Accountable to a clear, coherent, and common set of purposes, individual schools might then invest in local curricular reforms without having to worry about ease of transfer.⁷

⁷ Robert Shoenberg, General Education in an Age of Student Mobility, “Why Do I Have to Take this Course? Or Credit Hours, Transfer, and Curricular Coherence” http://www.aacu.org/transfer/student_mobility/whydoi.cfm.

In a sense, some of this work has already been completed in Washington State with the Direct Transfer Agreement. Students who complete the Direct Transfer Associate degree are not evaluated on a course-by-course basis. Instead, it is assumed they have met most, if not all, general education requirements and they are accepted at the junior class level.

However, the work of the Association of American Colleges and Universities seems to go deeper into general education issues by closely involving faculty and asking what general education requirements are intended to accomplish. Their work also involves students more closely and intends to answer a common student question: “Why do I have to take this course?” Thus, their work is more systemic in linking the purpose of general education to teaching, and also to student learning. It will be interesting to follow their work to see how they approach this issue, and whether any of their findings can be applied to Washington State articulation agreements.

2) “State Policy and Community College-Baccalaureate Transfer,” The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and The Institute for Higher Education Policy, Jane Wellman (August 2002)

Jane Wellman selected six states based on their reliance on transfer and on their grades for completion in Measuring Up 2000.⁸ High-performing states selected by Wellman were Florida, New York, and North Carolina; low-performing states were Arkansas, New Mexico, and Texas. Wellman compared each of these state’s policies in transfer, attempting to find characteristics in common between the low and high performers. Transfer policies analyzed included enrollment planning, academic policies affecting transfer, and data collection and accountability.

Few differences were found between low- and high-performing states. However, high-performing states did differ in governance structure – with the high-performing states possessing stronger state governance capacities. All three of the high-performing states also did a better job of using data as a tool, including state-level performance feedback to institutions reporting how they performed compared to other institutions.

None of the six states used all the tools available to improve transfer. Wellman’s study concludes with eight recommendations for state policy, as follows:

- 1) Develop baseline information about statewide transfer performance.
- 2) Clarify state policy and plans for two- to four-year transfer, and set goals and measures for performance.
- 3) Perform statewide transfer policy audits, to ensure that policies are consistent and that performance measures do not inadvertently discourage transfer.
- 4) Make sure that articulation and credit transfer agreements are in place.

⁸ The state-by-state report card for higher education, developed by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

- 5) Focus state policy change on low-performing institutions.
- 6) Use financial aid as a tool to promote two- to four-year transfer.
- 7) Include private institutions in transfer planning and performance accountability.
- 8) Identify and invest in core resources for transfer at the institutional level.

Washington State already employs many of these tools, but could improve in many areas.⁹ For example, baseline information and goals for transfer performance exist via the graduation efficiency index. The institutions have developed many articulation and credit transfer agreements. The Higher Education Coordinating Board, through the Fund for Innovation, has invested in core resources for transfer at the institutional level.¹⁰ The remaining recommendations have not been fully implemented.

Conclusions

- **Transfer work is ongoing.** Transfer is not a process that can be “fixed” and forgotten. Originally, the Associate of Arts degree was considered sufficient for helping all transfer students graduate efficiently. However, more specific requirements and complicated major advising has led to new tracks. The complexity of transfer issues requires ongoing analysis, collection of data, and continued efforts at refinement.
- **Two national studies related to transfer offer interesting ideas:** a focus on general education requirements and a list of recommendations for improving transfer.

III. Access: Is it endangered? What can be done to improve it?

In 1999-2000, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges reported 37,637 students as “transfer-ready.”¹¹ Two years later, in 2001-2002, over 10,500 students transferred from Washington community colleges to public four-year institutions (including 1,688 transitions from the Running Start program), and another 1,975 transferred to private colleges. Using conservative estimates based on historical participation rates, an increase of approximately 4,000 transfer students is expected by 2010.¹²

Proportionality Agreement

Each public four-year college or university in Washington has agreed to maintain the same proportion of two-year transfer students that it enrolled in 1992. This agreement was reached

⁹ Washington received a B- in completion in the Measuring Up 2000 survey, and an A- in the 2002 survey.

¹⁰ Eastern Washington University’s “Co-Located and Co-Designed Academic and Student Services for the Transferring Student” and University of Washington’s “Mutual Transcript Research Enterprise” received awards from the Fund for Innovation. See <http://www.hecb.wa.gov/Docs/packets/JunMtg02.pdf> for a full report.

¹¹ SBCTC presentation to HECB, “Baccalaureate Degree Access for Community and Technical College Students,” March 27, 2002.

¹² “Patterns Underlying the Current and Future Trends in Transfers from Community Colleges to Four-Year Public and Independent Institutions,” Research Report No. 98-7, SBCTC, September 1998, p. 3.

after intense negotiation completed in 1994 and involving representatives from the different institutions. Proportions at the public baccalaureate institutions, in 1992 and currently, are as follows:

The proportions of community college students enrolled at four-year institutions are within agreed levels (1992-93 and 2001-02)

Institution	Agreed-upon Proportion (1992-93)	Proportion of Incoming Students (2001-02)
Central Washington University	30%	32%
Eastern Washington University	29%	31.5%
The Evergreen State College	29%	44.9%
Western Washington University	32%	32.8%
University of Washington	30%	32.9%
Washington State University	27%	28.8%

Source: 2002 Institutional Survey, conducted by the HECB.

UW and WWU count Running Start students as community college transfers.

Although each institution's community college population is still within agreed-upon proportions, that scenario is likely to change soon.

Upper-division courses are more expensive to teach than lower-division courses. If a large proportion of students is enrolled at the more expensive upper-division level, this can result in an enrollment situation that is financially problematic for the institutions.

All institutions currently enroll large freshman classes. What will happen as these freshmen move to the junior class level? Unless even larger freshman classes are admitted in the next two years, the students who are now freshmen may create a "bulge" at the junior level – making spaces more limited for students wishing to transfer in at the junior level.

Possibly signaling future enrollment policy, the University of Washington is deferring admission until spring 2003 for 300 eligible transfer applicants who applied in winter 2003. In return, the university will accept 15 community college credits over the 90 normally allowed. This situation may worsen if state funding continues to decline.

Addressing Access Challenges: Three Options

(1) Rationing

Rationing, which would narrow the pool of transfer students through stricter admissions criteria, could help alleviate access problems. An example of a rationing approach would be denying admission at a public four-year college or university to students with lower grade point averages. However, the low tuition costs and open-door policy of the community colleges offer academic opportunity to students who might not otherwise attend college. Thus, a rationing approach to transfer may have the undesirable effect of cutting off access to a four-year institution to the very students who might need it most.

(2) Increasing Supply

Many possible avenues exist for increasing the opportunities available to transfer students, including:

- Allowing selected community colleges to offer upper-division courses.
- Investigating access at private colleges and universities.
- Increasing access through off-campus centers or other collaborative arrangements in which baccalaureate institutions offer courses on community college campuses.
- Expanding existing access routes (e.g., adding enrollment slots at baccalaureate institutions).
- Adding a comprehensive regional baccalaureate institution in the King County area.

The state might use one or more of these approaches to increase access. However, before pursuing any of these options, more study as to feasibility, cost-effectiveness, student preference and demographics will be required.

(3) Alternative Funding Mechanism

Upper-division courses are more expensive to teach. Therefore, funding upper-division enrollment at a higher rate might give institutions an incentive to accept transfer students at the junior level. Implementation of this option would require detailed analysis to determine appropriate funding levels.

Conclusions

Access for transfer students has been preserved at agreed-upon levels. However, access is becoming endangered by two factors: 1) low enrollment funding overall and 2) large freshmen classes. Three options exist: rationing, increasing supply, and providing funding incentives. Rationing is the least desirable, since the opportunities offered by transfer would then be decreased. The other two options would require extensive analysis to implement.

IV. Bachelors of Applied Science

While not a traditional goal for transfer, the prospect of developing a new type of bachelors degree with an “applied” focus could result in many benefits. These benefits include:

1) increasing the state’s baccalaureate production rate, 2) increasing the earning power of individual students, and 3) producing a more highly educated workforce.

The University of Phoenix and City University already have begun to accept a new associate degree (Associate of Applied Science degree) toward technical bachelors degrees. The “upside down” transfer approach used at The Evergreen State College is also ideal for students pursuing the technical bachelors degree, as it allows students to complete the “applied” portion of their degree at the community college, followed by the general education requirements at the baccalaureate institution.

Although not all baccalaureate institutions in Washington are interested in offering a Bachelors of Applied Science, several institutions are, including Central Washington University and Eastern Washington University. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges is now working to initiate discussions with other institutions that may offer applied baccalaureate options.

Appendix A

Ethnic Breakdown: Community/Technical College Students intending to transfer vs. incoming freshmen at four-year colleges

	CTC Students Intending To Transfer, Fall		4-Year First-Time Degree Seeking Freshmen, Fall	
	<u>1997</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2001</u>
White	41,615	44,203	7,658	8,848
% of Total	77.7%	73.9%	70.7%	69.1%
African American	2,554	2,900	263	327
% of Total	4.8%	4.8%	2.4%	2.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5,019	6,019	1,491	1,845
% of Total	9.4%	10.1%	13.8%	14.4%
Latino/Hispanic	2,448	4,349	400	500
% of Total	4.6%	7.3%	3.7%	3.9%
Native American	1,109	1,077	178	194
% of Total	2.1%	1.8%	1.6%	1.5%
Other Race/Unknown	825	1,280	836	1,088
% of Total	1.5%	2.1%	7.7%	8.5%
Total	53,570	59,828	10,826	12,802

Source: SBCTC Fall Enrollment Report excludes students who did not respond; IPEDS Fall Enrollment for four-year institutions, excluding non-resident aliens.

Appendix B

Groups Involved in Transfer Issues

Council of Presidents: Represents four-year public college interests in the state of Washington.

Interinstitutional Committee of Academic Officers (ICAO): Chief academic officers of public baccalaureate institutions (provosts).

Interinstitutional Committee of Registrars and Admissions Officers (ICORA): Registrars and admissions officers of public baccalaureate institutions.

Instruction Commission: Chief academic officers at two-year institutions.

Articulation and Transfer Council (A&T): Chartered by the Instruction Commission to address transfer issues.

State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC): Oversees the operation of thirty-four community and technical colleges in Washington.

Washington Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU): Established in 1953, represents ten independent colleges to support and promote independent liberal arts higher education in Washington.

Washington Council for High School-College Relations

Inter-College Relations Commission (ICRC): Established in 1970 by the Washington Council for High School-College Relations, ICRC is a voluntary association of institutions facilitating transfer between institutions of postsecondary education.

ATOPS (Alternatives for the Transfer of Occupational Programs): Organized by ICRC to review bachelors degree programs available to vocational/technical graduates of the various community colleges.

OAR (Ongoing Articulation Review Committee): A standing committee organized by ICRC to review the compliance of community colleges and baccalaureate institutions to the transfer associate degree guidelines.

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB).

Washington Community College Registrars & Admissions Officers (WACCRAO).

Appendix C

Current Transfer Policies

The Direct Transfer Agreement

The “Direct Transfer Agreement” (DTA) allows students who complete a direct transfer associates degree to transfer all two years of their coursework toward their lower-division requirements at a four-year institution. All general education requirements (generally 15 to 20 credits each of social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences) are considered fulfilled under this agreement by most institutions.

Priority in Admissions

Students are given priority in the baccalaureate admissions process if they meet one of the following three criteria:

- Completion of a direct transfer associates degree.
- Completion of 90 community college quarter credits (two years).
- Inability to progress further at a two-year college.

Students who qualify in these categories must also meet other admissions criteria, such as a 2.75 incoming grade point average at the University of Washington and Western Washington University, and a 2.0 incoming grade point average at the remaining four-year institutions.

Referral

The DTA provides a “referral” mechanism, which places students at another four-year institution if their first choice institution is unable to accept them.

Proportionality

Each of the public institutions agreed in 1994 to maintain its 1992 proportions of transfer students.

Other Transfer Policies

Four other policies affect transfer student behavior:

- 1) Students are not required to be prepared for a major upon admission as a transfer student.
- 2) A maximum of 90 credits from a two-year college can be accepted under the DTA by a four-year institution.

- 3) There is no set minimum number of credits defining transfer. Some studies use 15 or more credits to define a “transfer” student. In admissions, if students have completed less than 40 transfer credits before applying to a baccalaureate institution, the college or university evaluates their high school transcripts in addition to their community college transcripts. No priority in admissions is awarded, however, unless the student has met the requirements under the direct transfer agreement.
- 4) Students who do not complete a direct transfer associate’s degree (but who may nonetheless still have completed 90 credits) undergo a course-by-course evaluation of their transcripts to determine whether or not their coursework meets general education and other elective requirements.

Master Plan 2004 Discussion

Transfer



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Why is Transfer an Important Issue to Discuss?

- Transfer provides opportunity
- Many students transfer (close to 13,000 last year)
- Perceptions that transfer is “inefficient”
- Access for transfer students may become a problem in the future
- A new transfer degree is being developed

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2

Presentation Goal: Provide a Framework for Discussing Transfer Policy

- Review HECB authority in transfer policy
- Review transfer terminology and current policy
- Present transfer efficiency findings
- Discuss ongoing transfer work
- Describe potential access problems and solutions
- Briefly describe new transfer degree

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3

HECB Authority in Transfer

State Law directs the HECB to:

- Establish transfer policy
- Maintain a statewide transfer of credit policy and agreement, in cooperation with the state institutions and SBCTC, designed to:
 - Facilitate student transfer and transcript evaluation
 - Better serve people seeking information about courses and programs
 - Aid in academic planning
 - Improve the review and evaluation of academic programs at the public colleges and universities

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4

Transfer Terminology

- General education requirements: 15 to 20 credits each of Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences
- "Two plus two":
 - General education requirements are completed at a two-year college
 - Specialized study is completed at a four-year college
- "Upside down" degree:
 - Specialized study is completed at a two-year college
 - General education requirements are completed at a four-year college

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5

Current Transfer Policy in Washington The "DTA"

- Direct Transfer Associate's degree
 - 4-year college will accept all 90 credits (two years)
 - Most general education requirements fulfilled
 - Does not guarantee admission to major
 - The original "DTA" was not major-specific
- New DTAs have been recently created in sciences
- New DTAs are planned for business, education

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6

What does "efficient" transfer mean?

- The graduation efficiency index measures credits to degree
- Graduation rates measure time to degree

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7

Findings: Efficiency in Transfer

- Using the graduation efficiency index:
 - Transfer students, defined broadly, graduate less efficiently than freshmen at all public institutions
 - Evergreen and Central report highest transfer graduation efficiency overall
- Students transferring after two years at a community college:
 - Graduate at high rates over time at all public 4-year institutions
 - Graduate most efficiently in social sciences; less efficiently in science and math (UW/WSU)

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8

Two Surveys Reveal Student Perspective on Transfer

Survey population: Students with at least 45 credits who intended to transfer (limited to Clark College and Bellevue Community College)

- 29% did not transfer from Clark
- 43% did not transfer from Bellevue
- Top reasons for not transferring: vocational/work, life changes, personal decisions

- 12 % experienced problems in transfer from Clark
- 16% experienced problems in transfer from Bellevue

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9

Transfer Work is Ongoing

- Two national studies offer ideas for improving transfer:
 - “Greater Expectations for Student Transfer”: revisiting general education requirements
 - “State Policy and Community College-Baccalaureate Transfer”: eight recommendations for transfer policy

How efficient should transfer be?

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10

Access is an Emerging Problem

- Institutions have maintained agreed-upon levels
- 4,000 additional transfer students expected by 2010 (conservative estimate)
- Budget shortfalls and large freshmen classes may create access problems for transfer students
- Examples of ideas for addressing access issues include:
 - Rationing
 - Adding enrollment slots
 - Providing financial incentives

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11

New Transfer Degree: Bachelor's of Applied Science

- Allows transfer of Associate's Degree in Applied Science
- Some private institutions already accept the degree
- Central and Eastern are interested
- Works well with "upside-down" approach
- Advantages include increased participation, earning power, educated workforce

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12